War Veteran. Associations has asked the Indian community to ignore the threats and ultimatums issued by the Association's Secretary for Projects. There has been no panic or concern expressed by the Indian community in Zimbabwe.

(c) and (d) The Government of India through the High Commission of India in Harare has taken up the matter with the Government of Zimbabwe and has been assured that the latter would safeguard the interest of the Indian community in Zimbabwe.

Applications pending with passport offices in Punjab

5328. SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications pending for issue of passport with the passport offices in Punjab;

(b) since when, these are pending; and

(c) by when, these are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) The number of applications pending for issue of passport with the two Passport Offices in Punjab as on 30-04-02 is indicated below Passport Office-wise. An application is considered pending after clear police verification report has been received and the application is complete in all respects.

Regional Passport Office, Chandigarh	—	2707
Passport Office, Jalandhar	—	Nil

(b) and (c) Passports are normally issued within 10 days of receipt of clear police verification reports. Passport Office Chandigarh has been instructed to clear all the pending cases at the earliest.

Opening of Canadian Consulate Office in Punjab

5329. SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is pending to start a consulate office of Canadian High Commission in Punjab;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if so, the details thereof and by when it is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (c) Government of India approved the expansion of the operations of the Visa Collection Center in Chandigarh of the Canadian High Commission to a full consulate in September 2001, on the basis of a request by the Government of Canada.

(d) Following this approval, the Canadian High Commission has informed Government that the strength of the Canadian Consulate would be augmented by one or two Canadian High Commission officers for one week each month with the purpose of conducting immigrant selection interviews.

Use of Nuclear Weapons by Pakistan against India

5330. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI RAMAMUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the statement made by the Pakistan President about the use of nuclear weapons against India in the event of possible war between India and Pakistan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (c) Government has seen reports to this effect, as reported in 'Der Spiegel' and reflected subsequently in our print media. Government continues to closely monitor all developments related to Pakistan's nuclear and missile programme. It remains fully committed to take all necessary steps to effectively safeguard India's security and national interests.

Military cooperation with NATO

†5331. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an agreement has been signed or offer has been made for military cooperation with NATO;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.